Economic and Social Council

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Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 22 July 2015

[*on the recommendation of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (E/2015/44)*]

2015/28. Report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its fourteenth session

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolutions 2012/28 of 27 July 2012, 2013/23 of 24 July 2013, 2014/38 of 18 November 2014 and other related resolutions on public administration and development, in which it affirmed that service to citizens should be at the centre of transforming public administration and that the foundations of sustainable development at all levels include transparent, participatory and accountable governance and a professional, ethical, responsive and information and communications technology-enabled public administration,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 50/225 of 19 April 1996, in which the Assembly recognized that effectiveness of government requires an efficient and effective public administration in all countries that is responsive to the needs of the people, promotes social justice, ensures universal access to quality services and productive assets and creates an enabling environment for sustainable people-centred development,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 69/228 of 19 December 2014 on promoting and fostering the efficiency, accountability, effectiveness and transparency of public administration by strengthening supreme audit institutions, in which the Assembly emphasized that efficient, accountable and transparent public administration has a key role to play in the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Recalling the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled "The future we want",[1] and recognizing that effective governance at the local, subnational, national, regional and global levels representing the voices and interests of all is critical for advancing sustainable development,

[1] General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

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Recalling also General Assembly resolution 68/309 of 10 September 2014, in which the Assembly decided that the proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals contained in its report[2] shall be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs will also be considered, in the intergovernmental negotiation process at the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly,

Recalling further the report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing,[3] which highlights, inter alia, the importance of ensuring transparency and accountability of financing at the national, regional and international levels,

Referring to the United Nations Convention against Corruption,[4] which entered into force on 14 December 2005,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 60/252 of 27 March 2006 and 69/204 of 19 December 2014, in which the Assembly reaffirmed the need to more effectively harness the potential of information and communications technology to promote the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, through sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development,

Recognizing the work of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration in providing policy advice and programmatic guidance to the Council on issues related to governance and public administration, and the relevance of the work of the Committee to the acceleration of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda,

Recognizing also the support being provided by the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Development Management to countries on public sector leadership, institutional and human resources capacity development, electronic and mobile government and citizen engagement in development management,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its fourteenth session;[5]

2. *Notes* the work done by the Committee on building trust in government in pursuit of the sustainable development goals, in accordance with the theme of the 2015 session of the Economic and Social Council, on redefining relationships and responsibilities in support of participatory governance and responsive public service delivery, including through e-solutions, on strengthening innovation, prioritization, informed decision-making and integration of policy development processes, and on promoting accountable institutions, ethical leadership and integrity;

3. *Also notes* the critical significance of citizens' confidence in effective and capable institutions and the means of implementation of the sustainable development goals as a core enabler of building trust in government, and encourages Member States to make use of the transition period to address gaps in governance and implementation arrangements that contribute to such confidence;

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[2] A/68/970 and Corr.1.

[3] A/69/315.

[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2349, No. 42146.

[5] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2015, Supplement No. 24* (E/2015/44).

4. *Underlines* that attaining the future sustainable development goals and related targets, in accordance with national and local contexts and priorities, will require clarifying roles and responsibilities of public sector entities, civil society and private sector actors in policy design and implementation, taking into account pre-existing power structures;

5. *Stresses* that the sustainable development goals are different from the Millennium Development Goals and need more citizen ownership, and encourages Governments to foster the participation of citizens in their implementation at all levels, in a trustful manner, in order to mobilize efforts and resources for achieving sustainable development;

6. *Reaffirms* that access to public service by citizens should be a central concern of public sector transformation in pursuit of the sustainable development goals, and encourages Member States to create pathways to citizen engagement with a view to designing policies and strategies in an inclusive manner, inter alia, by strengthening regulatory processes of public consultation with all stakeholders at all levels;

7. *Stresses* the need for capacity-building, within specific country contexts, to promote collaborative relationships among public and private sectors and civil society, monitor progress and strengthen accountability frameworks for achievement of the sustainable development goals;

8. *Encourages* Member States to continue to strengthen e-government and the use of mobile technology, open data and evidence-based decision-making with a view to promoting effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels;

9. *Stresses* that to ensure support for the sustainable development goals across Governments and among the general public, there is a need for articulation of universalized public values and solidarity, buttressing of cross-governmental political will and incentives for cooperation among all stakeholders;

10. *Acknowledges* that more informed decisions and better prioritization occur when citizens and non-State actors are engaged throughout the policy cycle, recognizing that universities and the private sector are important actors in public sector innovation, and encourages public authorities at all levels to engage universities and the private sector in research and experimentation in the development of new capabilities for policy integration;

11. *Recognizes* that policy integration, involving effective policy design and implementation, stakeholder engagement and coordination across government, calls for transformative leadership, creativity, critical thinking and analytical skills, supported by an enabling environment comprising, inter alia, lead agencies tasked with reducing fragmentation through a process of programme review, and behaviours that promote sharing of data, information, knowledge, ideas and resources;

12. *Underscores* that effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels depend on a culture of ethics and integrity in the public sector, and encourages educational institutions, including schools and institutes of public administration, to promote professionalism and ethics among future public servants;

13. *Recognizes* that national oversight institutions have an essential role to play in the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, inter alia, by promoting transparency and monitoring the disbursement and proper utilization of public resources at all levels;

14. *Encourages* Governments at all levels to strengtnen public financial management by modernizing accounting standards and introducing more advanced systems of accounting;

15. *Notes* that promoting integrity and transparency and ending impunity are essential to the prevention of corruption by public officials, and encourages Member States to strengthen collaboration with civil society, the private sector and the media, as appropriate, in exposing and addressing illicit practices;

16. *Requests* the Committee, at its fifteenth session, to examine and make recommendations on the governance and institutional aspects of implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to results, in accordance with the theme of the 2016 session of the Council;

17. *Reiterates its invitation* to the Committee to enhance its interaction and coordination with the Council and other subsidiary bodies of the Council with a view to addressing cross-cutting areas through the established working methods of the Council;

18. *Requests* the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat to continue:

(*a*) To address gaps in research, policy analysis, formulation and integration as an aspect of governance and public administration and continue to implement initiatives such as the United Nations E-Government Survey, the Global e-Government Forum, the United Nations Public Service Awards and Forum, the World Public Sector Report and updated guidance on civic engagement, inter alia, with a view to supporting monitoring and implementation of the future post-2015 development agenda;

(*b*) To increase the scope and depth of capacity-development activities, as appropriate, with the aim of better assisting countries, including post-conflict countries and countries engaged in democratic institution-building, according to their specific contexts and needs, in building effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels in pursuit of the sustainable development goals;

(*c*) To promote transformative government and innovation in public governance, including through information and communications technology and e-government, so as to advance sustainable development, through the transfer of knowledge on effective governance at the global, regional, national and local levels;

(*d*) To assist in the implementation and review of the governance-related aspects of the Plan of Action adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society at its first phase, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003,[6] and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society adopted by the Summit at its second phase, held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005;[7]

(*e*) To facilitate, promote and coordinate the implementation of new and innovative activities and initiatives on effective governance and public administration in order to test, validate and scale up innovative methodologies and practices to advance sustainable development;

[6] See A/C.2/59/3, annex.

[7] See A/60/687.

(*f*) To promote collaboration and coherence of its activities in governance and public administration with the activities of the relevant departments of the Secretariat and United Nations agencies, as appropriate.

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